

What is Claimed is:

1. A method for providing a targeted message to a user that is used to implement an interactive television application, comprising:
 - creating a message having associated
 - 5 targeting criteria;
 - distributing the message to a plurality of users;
 - comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information; and
 - 10 presenting the message to the user for which the targeting criterion is satisfied.
2. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising distributing the message through a television distribution facility.
3. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising distributing the message through the Internet.
4. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising distributing the message through the Internet and a television distribution facility.
5. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising presenting the message using a set-top box.
6. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising presenting the message using a digital video recorder.

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7. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising:

using the interactive television application to set a reminder based upon user input;
5 and

comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the reminder.

8. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising:

using the interactive television application to subscribe to a service based upon user
5 input; and

comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the service.

9. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising:

using the interactive television application to set a favorite setting; and
5 comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the favorite setting.

10. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising:

using the interactive television application to set a parental control; and
5 comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the parental control.

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11. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising:

.using the interactive television application to select content for recording; and

5 comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the content.

12. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising:

using the interactive television application to order a product; and

5 comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the product.

13. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising:

using the interactive television application to order a service; and

comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the service.

14. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising comparing the targeting criterion to stored user information that a television service provider has set.

15. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising providing the message from an interactive television application provider.

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16. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising providing the message from a television service provider.

17. A system for providing a targeted message to a user that is used to implement an interactive television application, comprising:

a first processor that creates a message
5 having an associated targeting criterion and that causes the message to be distributed to a user;

a second processor that compares the targeting criterion with stored user information and that causes the message to be presented to the user for
10 which the targeting criterion is satisfied.

18. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the first processor is part of a television distribution facility.

19. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the first processor also causes the message to be distributed through the Internet.

20. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the first processor is part of a television distribution facility and causes the message to be distributed through the Internet.

21. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor is part of a set-top box.

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22. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor is part of a digital video recorder.

23. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor also sets a reminder based upon user input and compares the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the reminder.

24. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor also subscribes to a service based upon user input and compares the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the service.

25. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor also sets a favorites setting based upon user input and compares the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the
5 favorites setting.

26. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor also sets a parental control based upon user input and compares the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the parental
5 control.

27. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor also selects content for recording based upon user input and compares the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the
5 content.

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28. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor also orders a product based upon user input and compares the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the product.

29. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor also orders a service based upon user input and compares the targeting criterion to stored user information relating to the service.

30. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the second processor also compares the targeting criterion to stored user information that a television service provider has set.

31. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the first processor is part of an interactive television application provider.

32. The system defined in claim 17 wherein the first processor is part of a television service provider.

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